

*Attends the St. Bernard Parish "Annual Day of Reflection" Breakfast*  
August 27, 2010

CHALMETTE, LA —U.S. Rep. Charlie Melancon (D-LA) today joined students, teachers, and residents of St. Bernard Parish in recognizing the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's landfall with the community's Annual Day of Reflection breakfast. The memorial event, hosted by the St. Bernard Parish School Board, was held this morning at Chalmette High School and is an opportunity for the community to remember the losses they suffered because of Hurricane Katrina and the levee failures, while also celebrating the rebuilding progress and unity of spirit evident in St. Bernard today.

**"Five years ago this weekend, Louisianians watched in horror as a monster storm slowly bore down on our state, the levees built to protect us collapsed, and the water began to rise. For weeks, thousands of homes remained underwater. And when the floodwaters finally receded, the destruction that remained was like nothing we had ever experienced.**

**"In the wake of the worst natural disaster in our nation's history, we vowed to rebuild stronger and better than before. There were some dark days in the recovery, when bureaucracy, indifference, and fatigue threatened to defeat us. But because of the hard work and perseverance of ordinary people, people who fought every single day to rebuild their homes and recover what was lost in the storm, five years later we can say with confidence: we made it.**

**"We still have much to do. Despite the progress with rebuilding the levees in New Orleans, most communities throughout coastal Louisiana still don't have comprehensive hurricane protection. When the next major storm comes, many towns could be right back where we started. And the coastal wetlands that serve as our first line of defense are eroding every minute of every day, with over 25 square miles of land disappearing into the Gulf every year.**

**"Our recovery is far from over. Until every community in south Louisiana has comprehensive hurricane protection, and until we reverse the catastrophic loss of our coastal wetlands, our recovery will not be complete**

**"When the President visits Louisiana this weekend, I will ask him to remember Katrina and the lives lost not just with words, but with deeds. I will ask the President to learn the lessons of Katrina, and make a serious federal commitment to hurricane protection and coastal restoration for all of Louisiana.**

**"We must continue the progress we have made over the past five years, and keep striving to rebuild Louisiana stronger and smarter than ever."**

Much of Louisiana's Third Congressional District suffered severe damage during Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. St. Bernard Parish in suburban New Orleans was almost entirely flooded when the levee system failed and thousands of people lost their homes. While great progress has been made, the recovery is far from over.

To keep south Louisiana's hurricane recovery a national priority, Rep. Melancon partnered with Congressional leadership in leading annual working trips to the Gulf Coast around the anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. In 2006, 2007, and 2008, Rep. Melancon led Congressional delegations to south Louisiana to view the progress that has been made and learn how they could better help the region fully recover. While in Louisiana, these Representatives from states across the country toured local schools, sheriff's offices, health care clinics, levee projects, and the homes of people still rebuilding. During these visits, the members of Congress have had conversations with both local leaders and average citizens working to rebuild their communities – discussions that have been critical to passing dozens of pieces of legislation and maintaining national support for Louisiana's recovery.

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